

**BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
City Hall, 11th Floor
Park Conference Room
455 N. Main
May 20, 2013
3:00 p.m.**

Present: Bryan Frye, Tom Roth, Cindy Claycomb, Ron Allen, Andy Solter

Absent: Jerry Warren, Randy Brown

Also Present: Doug Kupper, Director of Park and Recreation, Elizabeth Harlenske, City Assistant Attorney, Christina Butler, Clerk, Karen Holmes, Recreation Superintendent, David McGuire, Forestry Superintendent, John Philbrick, Lee Ann Sack, Barbara McGuire, Stacey Hamm, Lauragail Locke, Mark Lowry, Lacey Beard, Cody Beard citizens.

The meeting was called to order at 3pm.

PUBLIC AGENDA

None

REGULAR AGENDA

Motion by Frye, second by Claycomb, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED to move Item 2C until Cody Beard arrived in the meeting as he was driving into Wichita from out of town (4-0).

Item 1: Approval of Minutes

Motion by Frye, second by Roth, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to approve, sign and file minutes of the April 15, 2013, Board of Park Commissioners Regular Meeting (4-0).

Item 2A: Park Passport (Lee Ann Sack/Stacey Hamm)

Sack identified herself as the Chairperson of the Park Passport committee. Stacey Hamm, Barbara McGuire and Matt Martinez also served on the committee. She stated that the Park Passports are available at recreation centers and various locations. The goal is to get people out to the parks and participate in a simple activity. They are to visit 15 parks and find the signs placed in the parks. There will be questions to answer about the location. There are also three bonus parks. Academy Sports has partnered with the Park and Recreation Department and has supplied outdoor prizes. The first 500 people who pick up passports will receive a cinch sack with coupons. Completed passports are to be returned in to recreation centers or Watson Park.

Allen noted that McAdams Park was not on the list of parks involved in the Park Passport program and asked why it was not included.

Sack said they had to narrow it down to 18 parks out of the 100+ City parks.

Barbara McGuire added that they wanted to show diversity in the amenities offered in the Park and Recreation Department.

Frye commended staff for making the program happen and getting Academy Sports involved in sponsorship and in creating this public/private partnership.

Kupper thanked staff for putting it together.

Item 2B: Gas Easement Request (John Philbrick)

Kupper introduced John Philbrick, Real Estate Administrator, in Property Management to discuss a gas easement request for the property near Murdock Park.

Philbrick stated he had received a request from Kansas Gas Service to put in a cathodic system to replace vertical systems with horizontal systems. It should be approximately 30 feet wide by 440 feet long sub-surface. They were offering \$2000 or \$0.15 per square foot. He noted that normally 10% of market land value was received, but the Board could ask for more.

Frye asked if there is anything on the land.

Philbrick responded there is nothing on it.

Frye asked if there were plans to do anything on it.

Kupper responded the land was deeded to the Park Board, not to the City, and there were no plans as of yet.

Frye asked if there was any public comment. There was none.

Motion by Frye, second by Allen, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to approve the request and direct Philbrick to ask for a minimum of \$2000 for the land (5-0).

Philbrick noted that \$2000 is probably close to market value.

Item 2C: Riverside Park Request (Cody Beard)

Beard (1103 N. Pearce) stated there is a lot next to his property (Lot 1014) that is zoned residential vacant. He researched County and City records and it shows it as a vacant. He noted that the 20 feet had been taken care of by the previous owners, and was not being cared for by the City. He stated that he would like to take care of the lot and take the fence 20 feet back to the south and would like to either purchase or get permission to use the land.

Solter asked if the intent is to care for the property.

Kupper asked if the intent is to take care of the land and purchase it.

Beard responded they would do whatever the City wanted.

Frye asked if any of the landscaping was encroaching on the vacant lot.

Kupper responded yes.

Frye noted that it becomes a challenge when they have to take the property back.

Beard stated he knew it might open up a can of worms.

Solter stated he thought it was a can of worms that needs to be opened. He stated he thought it could be a win-win to use this as an example to experiment with the public/private partnerships.

Beard noted there was not a precedent set for where they should mow.

Frye stated the Board could take it all out and make the line very clear. He stated there are a lot of parcels of land that are adjacent to City lots and with park land limited and no budget to acquire more, he was afraid to sell park land adjacent to private lots. There will be less and less park land.

Solter stated the Board had only had this come to them maybe two times in the past few years that he had been on the Board. He would strongly suggest to look at it or to discuss it. He felt it made a lot of sense if the Board could find people who will take care of the land and noted that Beard has a vested interest.

Kupper noted that Adopt a Park Agreements are actively pursued with adjacent property owners, but they have not allowed them to fence the area restricting public use. He stated they could do an adoption agreement where Beard mows the parcel, but is not allowed to fence it.

Solter asked Beard if he would be willing to care for the land without fencing it.

Beard asked "What's in it for me?"

Solter responded that was an understandable question. He stated that at the very least the City should mow the area on the same schedule as the park, but he liked the idea of having Beard care for it.

Frye stated that this was a late addition to the agenda and the Board did not have a chance to view the area.

Kupper stated that he discussed the matter with Councilwoman Janet Miller. She remembers the discussion of the Ron Doughty (previous owner) request to relinquish the property and was not in favor of the request at that time and is not in favor of this either.

Harlenske reviewed Charter 125 as it pertained to the matter.

Kupper stated that most of Riverside Park was bequeathed to the City before 1890 prior to the Park Board's existence. He stated he was not sure if the area in question is part of the area Griffenstein platted as Riverside Park and turned over to the City. He noted on the maps it is marked as vacant because the County left it out of the green zone as a park and the City has been pushing the County to get it corrected in the County's GIS.

Beard asked how he could verify that because everything he has seen states it is vacant property.

Kupper responded that it has been part of Riverside Park for over 100 years and all parks are vacant property.

Claycomb asked if the Park Board or the City is considered owners.

Harlenske responded the City. She noted that the Park Board could make a recommendation and it could or could not be followed by the City Council.

Frye asked if there were any suggestions and noted he would like time to view the area.

Allen stated he would like to study it too.

Frye deferred the issue for 30 days for review and said it would be on the June or July Park Board

agenda.

Beard restated the address as 1103 N. Pearce and the area in question is south of the property. He thanked the Board for consideration of the request.

Item 3A: Special Event Fee Policy Update (David McGuire)

McGuire stated there had been some revisions to the Special Event Fee Policy since it was last presented to the Board. They wanted to change the fees to make it easier to explain to the customer and easier to implement. They also need it to fit into the cost recovery pyramid. He noted that Claycomb had valid questions raised from the last meeting. Event promoters all pay a \$25 application fee and then they will choose from services provided. Bottom level of the pyramid is a community event with community benefit. He stated they changed the bottom level to base it on the different circumstances presented. They could also barter for the use of the parks to trade out fees. Attachment G (last page) lists the \$25 application fee plus the additional services that are offered for a fee. The customer can pay the \$25 and get the space as is. There is still a deposit of \$200 which is refundable if the area is cleaned up.

Solter stated he did not think the deposit is a problem, but wondered if the deposit could be based on number of people at the event.

Kupper responded they would need to work through that. Would a group be willing to put up a larger deposit for a larger run? Do we want to have a graduated scale on the deposits? Some runs may have 5,000 –15,000 people involved.

Claycomb stated that most were concerned with the fee rather than the deposit. She thought it may be better to have the sliding scale.

McGuire stated it would be easy to have a sliding scale based on numbers.

Claycomb noted she thinks it will make it more difficult to get discounts and waive fees because the customers will see the additional staff required for services.

Frye asked who will decide.

Kupper responded that McGuire and staff will most likely do that unless there is a question and it can be brought to the Park Board.

Claycomb stated that the bottom level of the pyramid is the only one that might have a question. She was pleased with the policy and shows they put some thought into it.

Frye asked if the policy had to go to City Council first.

Kupper responded that since City Council has embraced the cost recovery pyramid, he thinks they are ok with the Park Board approving what has been mapped out for the policy.

Motion by Claycomb, second by Frye, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to endorse the Special Event Fee Policy with the addition of a sliding scale deposit (5-0).

Kupper noted he will take it to the City Manager for endorsement.

Item 3B: Golf Update – Marketing Presentation (Stacey Hamm/Lauragail Locke)

Frye noted that the Golf Committee had requested a marketing update. Stacey Hamm and Lauragail Locke gave a presentation to the Golf Committee and he suggested that they give the same presentation to the Park Board.

Locke introduced the new Golf Division tag line, "Great greens for less green" and noted they had added new specials for the golf courses.

Hamm showed the new print piece that had been created. She noted that lessons were supposed to start in March but some had cancelled or were postponed due to the weather. The print piece will be updated regularly and will highlight tournaments and special events. Currently this is also being done through email blasts and facebook. She noted they kicked off the season with radio spots for twilight and afternoon discounts. The radio stations selected target the 25-49 year old demographic. Weddings will also be marketed on the radio as well.

Solter asked about the male to female player ratio.

Kupper responded he thought it was close to 75-80% male. He noted they had just hired the first female Golf Assistant Pro and are focusing on the female clientele at Clapp Golf Course.

Locke discussed the possibility of purchasing a Splurge magazine cover for her.

Hamm noted they had added KWCH to the local television advertisements in addition to KAKE TV. She noted they were maintaining the cable ads and had added Fox Sports, the History Channel and AMC. All media have value-added spots to go along with the purchased spots.

Locke noted they are adding billboards for advertising to keep golf courses top of mind.

Hamm stated they have a direct mail piece being sent this summer. They are using the same mailing company that did the distribution for the Recreation Activities Guide with targeted zip codes. The piece encourages golfers to take the postcard to a golf course to win prizes like golf clubs, season passes or an ipad.

Locke noted they will use facebook, an email blast, and golfwichita.com as well.

Hamm stated they are working with Shana Appelhanz at Auburn Hills on printed materials to add to wedding packages and promote them. They are also focusing on a tournament brochure. She noted that all golf courses have television monitors with a powerpoint running constantly in the clubhouse. They have also initiated fishbowl drawings for an 18-hole round and a cart for 2 players. Business cards and names are going to be put into a database that will be used later for a mailing list and tournaments.

Solter thought it was a great idea.

Hamm added that they would have an afternoon discount coupon on gowichita.com. She also planned to put courses on the social media calendar as well starting in September. She also met with the Hyatt Hotel for a "stay and play" package to include the golf courses in the package with a 20% discount coupon to play at the courses. There will be a link on the Hyatt web page.

Frye commended Hamm and Locke for putting this marketing campaign together. He noted the Golf Division received an extra \$50,000 in the budget for marketing to keep the message strong in the market. He wanted the Park Board to see the presentation because the Golf Committee was very receptive of this program. The City has great courses; they are in great shape; and they are less expensive to play.

Item 3C: Recreation Update (Karen Holmes/Mark Lowry)

Lowry introduced himself as the Recreation Center Director at Orchard Recreation Center. He brought the Hook A Kid on Golf program to Wichita in 1996 from the National Alliance for Youth Sports in

Florida. It started at Tex Consolver golf course and was expanded to four other courses. This year marks the 18th summer with over 700 kids in the program ages 8-15 years old. There is no charge for the program however the cost is \$130 per child. Funds are received from the Bob Martz Golf Tournaments, City Employee Tournament, and donations. The participants will receive a starter set of clubs and on the last day they get to play on the golf course. There are many corporate sponsors including Papa John's who sponsors pizza for the last day. The classes are offered at Auburn Hills, Clapp, MacDonald and Tex Consolver. They are at capacity for the summer. He stated that they started with 16 kids per course. He works with Communities in Schools for names of kids who would benefit from the program.

Kupper added that this program is not as impactful on the courses as the Junior Golf program is on Monday mornings at the courses. He stated they have tried to find a time to implement the program at Sim Golf Course, but they have so many regular players and do not want to displace them.

Roth asked if it is a "first come first served" program.

Lowry responded it is and they have parents calling in March to register their child. They started registering participants on May 6, 2013 and already have a waiting list. The program is partially funded by the Hook-A-Kid-On-Golf national office in Florida that has a grant with the United States Golf Association (USGA). Wichita's program has received \$3,000 this year and is on a waiting list for \$1,000 more.

Claycomb asked what it ends up costing.

Lowry responded only about \$8,000 a year.

Allen and Solter stated that it was a great investment.

Item 4: Updates from the Director and President

Kupper stated they are filling nine swimming pools with water for the 2013 swim season. He noted that despite the drought situation, it was decided it will not be a detriment to the water supply because of the way the pools are filled and recycled. They would have to think of ways to use the water again.

Harlenske asked if there was a way to let the chlorine dissipate.

Kupper responded they had not finalized the plans yet. He also noted that the interactive fountains have not been opened due to the water restrictions and the high evaporation rate for the fountains especially at Fairmount and Osage. They will not be activated at this point. There is an interdepartmental group submitting a plan to the City Manager and a workshop or City Council action is planned on June 4, 2013, to see what the recommendation is to be going forward regarding the fountains. He noted that the Park Department has been actively pursuing water cognizance: in the Golf Division since 1996 and in Park Maintenance Division since 2007. If soil moisture is too high or the wind is too high, then the irrigation system will not be activated. If the system detects leaks, it will shut itself down. He noted the department will probably be turning systems off or reducing what is normally done. They will sustain life in the turf, but it may not be green. Of the 300-400 acres of golf courses, 200 acres are irrigated. If you add athletic fields and ROW, the Park Department may account for 2 square miles (780 acres) of the City's 160 square miles of land. The Park Department is not the problem rather it is the other 158 square miles of fescue grass that is the problem.

Kupper also noted that the City is still issuing water well permits. Each well is like a soda straw in the City's water supply. He wanted the Park Board to know what is going on with the Department's water conservation because there will be more engagement in the community.

Frye asked if there was a timetable for possibly turning on the interactive fountains.

Kupper responded it could be as early as June 6, 2013.

Frye asked if any other pools would be closed.

Kupper responded that only Edgemoor and Country Acres are closed. He noted they had to adjust hours for all nine pools to remain open. He noted the need to increase attendance at McAdams, Boston and Aley. He stated they began engaging the neighborhood with a meeting at Evergreen for Evergreen and Minisa pools, but only had eight people attend. He mentioned Activate-Wichita.org as the website for community involvement and a place to submit ideas. Water walls and waltzing waters also have not been turned on.

Frye asked about the status of the water park in Buffalo Park.

Kupper responded they are looking at the design and deciding whether or not they will re-design.

Frye congratulated Don Harrison for his retirement.

Claycomb asked if the Department knew it was coming.

Kupper responded they knew two weeks before he retired. He had requested an interim position for one of the golf pros and would share that as soon as the appointment had been approved. The interim manager will lead the organization until they hire the new Golf Division Manager.

Frye noted there was a good turnout for the dedication of the Air Capital Park Single Track. He thanked the department for the nice asset.

Kupper noted there were 150 participants for the Ozsome bikefest.

Frye stated the groundbreaking for the new special event center at Botanica would be soon.

Frye asked about Park Board Commissioner changes.

Kupper stated the current Commissioner must serve until he is replaced.

Solter stated that Councilman Clendenin had not called him.

Frye stated that Randy Brown had indicated that he was planning to resign from the Board. He asked him to send a letter to Kupper and the Mayor, but as of yet the letter had not been received.

Item 5: Issues on the Horizon

Next Park Board meeting is scheduled for June 17, 2013.

Item 6: Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:55pm.

Bryan Frye, President

Christina Butler, Clerk